



Date: 2/8/2022

To: House Committee on Business and Labor

From: Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice (IMIrJ)

Re: Support for Farmworker Overtime

Members of the House Business and Labor Committee,

The Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice (IMIrJ) urges you to support Farmworker Overtime (HR 4002). We strongly support this bill because we believe in the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Farmworkers have been intentionally denied rights that other workers have enjoyed. It already has taken too long to ensure that farmworkers have just pay for their labor. We ask that you support this bill and right this systemic injustice.

IMIrJ is in relationship with over 160 faith communities throughout the state. Our IMIrJ community includes thousands of people of faith and fierce love from a myriad of backgrounds and religious traditions. In anticipation of this legislative session, we hosted virtual house meetings with immigrant leaders from Southern, Central, and Eastern Oregon as well as the Portland metro area and the Mid Willamette Valley to discuss the needs and priorities of our communities. Some of them shared separate written testimony that we invite you to read. All spoke about our joint respect for the work of farmworkers and our sadness that our laws do not reflect the importance of this work.

Our IMIrJ community shares a reverence for the significance of justice in both a spiritual and political sense. At a fundamental level, Justice is about fairness and equality. It's about feeling safe enough to breathe deep, to laugh, rest, worship, and play. Safe enough to put in a hard day's work and sleep easy when the day is done. Safe enough to simply be. Unfortunately, Among the concerns of farmworkers in Eastern Oregon are the inability to have sufficient money to pay for basic things such as heating during the winter months and the importance of getting a fair pay for their work during the growing season. This is especially acute for Oregonians who are immigrants and people of color.

Farmworker families wish to provide stability and wellbeing for their children and exploitative practices like exclusion from overtime means that farmworkers have to choose between overworking to provide that stability or being able to spend time with their children.

All workers including Farmworkers deserve labor rights, exclusion is shameful and Oregon can and must do better to address this type of unfairness that causes racial, rural and other inequities. Exclusion from overtime pay requires farmworkers to work many hours without having time to do other things like engage civically in Oregon legislature hearings to advocate for themselves. Overtime pay and labor rights should extend to all of Oregon's 86,389 estimated farmworkers.



We urge you to pass farmworker overtime in the 2022 Legislative Session to ensure farmworkers in Oregon are paid fairly for their skilled and essential contribution and presence in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice